DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 333 499 CS 507 478

AUTHOR Condry, John C.; Scheibe, Cynthia L.
TITLE National Children's Television, United States (1970-1990).
PUB DATE May 91
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association (41st, Chicago, IL, May 23-27, 1991). Best available copy.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Cartoons; *Childrens Television; Commercial Television; *Educational Television; Programing (Broadcast); *Sex Stereotypes; *Television Commercials; Television Research; *Violence; Young Children
IDENTIFIERS *Host Selling Television Commercials; Television History

ABSTRACT

Trends in the content and structure of television programs and commercials during children's viewing hours on U.S. network television over the past 20 years reveal a steady decrease in educational programs for children and an increase in violent acts. In addition, characters in both programs and commercials have remained remarkably sex-typed. A positive trend, however, is the increase in minority characters in both live programs and cartoons, something that was virtually unheard of 10 or 20 years ago. Analyses of data from the Human Development and Television Archive for 1983-1989 (along with the most recent data from March 1991) show a dramatic increase in both the frequency and amount of time devoted to product commercials during Saturday morning programs, averaging nearly 11 minutes per hour, which is over the new limit set by the Children's Television Education Act passed in 1990. Furthermore, advertising practices once considered unfair to children, such as "host-selling," have returned and deception has again become common in ads. Network programmers and their advertising colleagues appear to be content to grab and hold children's attention long enough to show them a commercial message. (Six figures and two tables of data are included; 18 references are attached.) (PRA)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED333499

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S TELEVISION, UNITED STATES (1970-1990)

John C. Condry
Cornell University

and

Cynthia L. Scheibe
Ithaca College

A paper presented to the International Communication Association Annual Meeting, May 23-27, 1991, Chicago, IL

Contact Address: Dr. John Condry
Dept. of Human Development
& Family Studies
NG25 MVR Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853

CS507478

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John Condry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ABSTRACT

This paper traces the changes in the content and structure of TV programs and commercials during children's viewing hours on American network television over the past 20 years, as a reflection of social policy concerns. The trends in program content are discussed with respect to the steady decrease in educational programs for children, the increase in violent acts, the gender and racial aspects of character portrayals, and the issue of children's programs with a product tie-in (i.e., "program-length commercials"). Among the findings reported concerning TV commercials are analyses from the Human Development & Television (HDTV) Archive for 1983-1989 (along with the most recent data from March 1991), which show a dramatic increase in both the frequency and amount of time devoted to product commercials during Saturday morning programs, now averaging nearly 11 minutes per hour which is over the new limit set by the Children's Television Education Act passed in 1990.

National Children's Television, United States (1970-1990)

John Condry and Cynthia Scheibe

In the early 1970s, children's television hours were often referred to as the "Saturday Morning Ghetto," reflecting the impoverished quality of the programs aimed at children and the high frequency of "junk food" and toy commercials appearing during this time. Since that time, however, federal agencies have held hearings and issued reports about the quality of television for children (by the Federal Communication Commision in 1972, and by the Federal Trade Commission in 1979), and there has been substantial public debate about the topic. This paper describes some of the changes (or lack of changes) that have occurred in Saturday morning television over these last 20 years.

The majority of the data reported come from the Human Development & Television (HDTV) Archive which was started in 1983 by John Condry and Cynthia Scheibe, and which is now a joint project between Cornell University and Ithaca College under their direction (Condry & Scheibe, 1989). The archive consists of representative samples of network television content collected every 2 years since 1983 (thus 1991 is a collection year). Each year's sample consists of one composite broadcast week selected from each of 4 months (March, June, September and December). On each day that is randomly selected, broadcast content is

videotaped from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. The 3 major networks are monitored through their affiliates in Syracuse, NY, alternating stations using a randomized block design. This produces 18 hours of broadcasting for each day sampled, with 504 hours each year. As the programs are taped, a synopsis is written of the show and all commercial messages are recorded, timed, and coded for product type. The archive now consists of over 2200 hours of television content, including about 100 hours of children's programs.

This paper focuses on network-affiliated children's television in the United States, although it is important to note that during this 20 year period there has also been a tremendous increase in high quality children's programs on PBS stations (e.g., Sesame Street, Mister Rogers, Square One TV). There has also been a dramatic rise in cable channels (a few of which contain quality children's programming), and the remarkable introduction of VCRs (VCRs as they are known today did not even exist 10 years ago). All of these sources offer important alternatives to the children's programming found on network-affiliated stations.

Nevertheless, the majority of American children still primarily watch those network-affiliated and independent stations that broadcast children's programs almost exclusively on Saturday mornings and weekday afternoons. Since the programs shown on weekday afternoons are rarely part of the network feed and are therefore much more variable across different markets, most of the data discussed in this paper reflects the Saturday morning hours only

Program Content.

What changes have occurred in the content of children's television

since television was first introduced in the early 1950s? First, the format of children's programs changed dramatically in the early 1960s, shifting from live studio shows (and reruns of old Westerns) to animated programs. Captain Kangaroo was still on network television (CBS) through the early 1980s, but is now found only on PBS. The only live show currently on Saturday morning network TV (for children) is Pee-Wee's Playhouse, and even that program will be gone in the fall.

In the early days of television, most of the children's programs integrated some aspects of educational content (even if it was only a demonstration of arts and crafts). Since that time there has been a steady decline in programs on network-affiliated stations that could be considered educational for children (Bence, 1987) **(see Fig. #1)**. The data from the HDTV Archive sample, using a very broad definition of "educational," shows a decline from 28% of all programs in 1983 to 13% in 1989. At the same time, the incidence of action adventure programs has remained relatively steady over the last 40 years (Bence, 1987), although the content of programs has shifted from Westerns (in the 1950s) to cartoons (from 1960 on).

In terms of the content of the programs, there are three things that are especially worth noting. The first, of course, is violence. The amount of violence in children's programs has continued to remain high throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (Gerbner & Gross, 1980; Gerbner & Signorielli, 1990) **(see Fig. #2)**. Nearly all the violence on children's programs is "humorous" violence in which characters are shot, blown up, fall down cliffs, go through meat grinders, barely escape being boiled and eaten, and so forth, but they don't die and are never even permanently hurt. Some have argued that this type of cartoon violence shouldn't really be considered violence at all (CBS Office of Social Research, 1977;

Signorielli, Gross, & Morgan, 1982). Many studies have demonstrated, however, that children may be just as likely to imitate cartoon humorous violence as they are more "realistic" portrayals of violence, and perhaps even more so since the violent actions in cartoons look like so much fun (Condry, 1989).

The most recent report by the group working out of the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, headed by George Gerbner, notes that on children's weekend television programs there are an average of 25 acts of violence per hour, committed by 7 out of 10 characters, in 9 out of 10 programs (Gerbner & Signorielli, 1990). By comparison, this same research group found that the rate of violent acts during prime time (8-11 p.m. weekdays) is 5-6 per hour, so children's programs contain 5 times more violent acts than prime time programs do. One consequence of the deregulation of television in the early 1980s, is illustrated by the fact that before 1980 there was an average of 18.6 violent acts per hour, after 1980 there was an average of 26.4 violent acts per hour (Gerbner & Signiorelli, 1990).

The second thing worth noting about these programs has to do with character portrayals, and there's good news and bad news on that front. The bad news is that the characters have remained remarkably sex-typed in children's programs, in the sense that it is primarily a male world, with only a few exceptions. You do find now that in "superhero groups" (e.g., Captain Planet, He-Man & the Masters of the Universe) there will usually be one or two female superheros, often - but not always - portrayed as capable and intelligent. However, the "Smurfette" syndrome still seems to exist - female characters are shown much less frequently than males, even among the animal characters, and there are very few lead female roles (Carter, 1991). The only current sole lead female character now on

Saturday morning is "Little Rosey," who is a take-off on Roseanne Barr, and this show has been cancelled for the fall. The network programmers generally admit that children's television is a "boy's world," in part because they assert that "it is well known that boys will watch a male lead and not a female lead...[while] girls are willing to watch a male lead." (Carter, 1991, p. 1).

The good news is that we now do see minority characters in both live programs and cartoons, something that was virtually unheard of 10 or 20 years ago. Nearly all cartoons have some black characters, although characters representing other racial groups are virtually nonexistant. There are no sole lead characters who are black, but the fact is that you do see many black characters (again, most "superhero groups" have characters of different races, and shows like the Flintstone Kids have several black families), which is a real improvement over the old days.

The last thing to note about programs has to do with so-called "program-length commercials." This has been an issue that Congress, the FCC, the networks, and children's lobbyist groups like Action for Children's Television, have been debating for the last decade. The issue is made more difficult to discuss because it depends on the definition of a program-length commercial. There is no question that the majority of children's programs on network-affiliated and independent stations are related to products reflecting the program characters, and that trend has increased substantially over the past 2 decades. You can now get the Ninja Turtles and Bart Simpson on just about anything you want, from popsicles to tricycles.

The issue generally boils down to a question of which came first, the program or the products (or if they were both produced at the same time). If you consider a program-length commercial to be any program that

features characters who also appear as toys or on other products, then one of the leaders in the field would be Sesame Street. If you view the incidence of programs that seemed to be produced after or at the same time as their related products, that practice seemed to peak in the mid-1980s (with shows like Transformers, Strawberry Shortcake, My Little Pony and The Gummi Bears) and the frequency of these types of shows has now declined. Now we are more likely to see programs that have grown out of popular films (like Beetlejuice or Ghostbusters), TV programs (Little Rosey), rock stars (New Kids on the Block), or videogames (Super Mario Brothers). Nearly all successful programs do spawn a wide variety of products featuring the characters in the show, but attempts by lobbyist groups to get these programs classified as commercials have failed. The new Children's Television Act of 1990 does forbid "program-length commercials," but they define them as "a program, associated with a product, in which commercials for that product are aired" (Kunkel, 1991, p. 3), which is essentially equating them with the practice of "host-selling."

Non-Program Content

With regard to commercials, again there is good news and bad news - mostly bad news. Based on the March 1991 sample in the HDTV Archive, an average hour of Saturday morning television currently contains 21-22 product commercials, plus 4-5 program promotions and 2-3 public-service announcements or drop-ins (which are informational messages produced by the networks or affiliates). This gives a total of about 30 non-program messages taking up about 12.5 minutes per hour. [Note: The new Children's Television Act establishes a limit of 10.5 minutes of commercials per hour on Saturday morning, but that only applies to product commercials

(not promos, PSAs or drop-ins), and the law doesn't go into effect until October 1. This issue will be discussed in more detail later.]

Does this reflect an "impoverished environment" of too many commercials and too little time for programs? It may seem like a lot, but when the Saturday morning hours are compared to the rest of the broadcast week **(see Fig. #3)**, we find that Saturday morning has just about the fewest number of minutes of commercials of any time period during the week, and the best ratio of product commercials to more educational non-program messages like PSAs and drop-ins. Comparing Saturday morning with weekday afternoons, for example, it is clear that weekday afternoons contain many more commercials per hour with almost no PSAs or drop-ins **(see Fig. #4)**. Unfortunately, this relatively favorable picture of Saturday morning television has gradually degenerated over the last decade, as the most recent HDTV data show.

The ratio of product commercials to other types of non-program content varies by time slot across the Saturday morning hours **(see Fig. #5)**, so that during the "fringe" hours (7 to 8 am, and 11 am to noon) the programs are often locally produced or syndicated rather than from a network feed; the audience is also much smaller and the stations correspondingly pack in more PSAs and fewer product ads. During the 8-11 a.m. time period, what might be called "children's prime time," the programming reflects almost exclusively the network feeds with a much higher audience. During those hours there are very few PSAs and drop-ins, with a much higher frequency of product commercials. Since these hours are therefore more representative of all network-affiliated programming (and less subject to variation across individual local stations), the remainder of the analyses to be reported are for those 8-11 a.m. hours only. In order to compare the most recent data from March 1991 with

previous years, only the data from the March samples in those years will be included.

Table 1, then, shows the data from the March HDTV Archive samples for 1983-1991 for the Saturday 8-11 a.m. time period. As this table illustrates, there has been a steady increase in the frequency of product commercials per hour, from 14.3 in 1983 to 22.0 in 1989 and 1991. There has also been a corresponding increase in the number of minutes devoted to product commercials, from an average of 7.39 per hour in 1983 to 10.67 per hour in 1991. While the frequency of product ads has leveled off over the last few years, the amount of time devoted to product commercials has continued to increase, largely because the use of 10 and 15 second commercials appears to have now declined; in 1989 there was a high frequency of 10, 15 and 20 second spots, but the 1991 sample contains almost entirely 30-second spots.

Probably the most dramatic finding concerns the proportion of overall non-program time that is devoted to product commercials. In 1983, as noted earlier, a large proportion of the non-program time was devoted to more educational messages (PSAs and drop-ins), with less than 60% of the time given to product ads. Now, nearly all of the non-program time is devoted to product commercials, while the time devoted to PSAs and drop-ins has been cut by more than 75%.

There have also been some important changes in the types of products advertised during children's programs **(see Table #2)**. The data reported by Barcus (1978; 1980) covering the 1970s indicated that more than a third of the commercials were for cereals and another third were for candies and snacks, while only 12% of the ads were for toys and games. An anlysis of product types in the 1983-1987 HDTV Archive samples (Condry, Bence & Scheibe, 1988) found that the frequency of toy commercials has

increased steadily in the intervening years, while cereal and restaurant ads have declined. Toy ads now account for 35-45% of the product commercials shown on Saturday morning in 1991. The proportion of commercials for candies and snacks has stayed about the same since 1983, accounting for about 15-20% of all commercials. Finally, the incidence of commercials for regular (more healthy, nonsugared) foods and beverages has remained very low throughout the history of children's television, and it remains low to this day.

Like the programs, the content of children's commercials has remained extremely sex-typed over the last two decades. In fact, of all television content, the most sex-typed ads appear to be those for children's toys (Condry, 1989). This is seen not only in the toys themselves (which are almost always targeted toward either boys or girls, but not both), but also in the characteristics and behaviors of the characters in the commercials, and even more dramatically in the formal features (i.e., voiceovers, music, lighting, sound effects, camera angles, etc.) As Huston, Wright and their colleagues at CRITC have repeatedly demonstrated (Huston & Wright, 1983; Huston, Greer, Wright, Welch, & Ross, 1984), there is a clear distinction between the formal features in boy ads (bright colors, loud music, male voiceovers) and girl ads (pastel colors, soft music, female voiceovers). Children recognize these differences and respond to them from a very early age (Alverez, Huston, Wright & Kerkman, 1988), even children from other countries (Paik, 1991).

One final aspect of the content of children's commercials is important to note, and that has to do with the various "guidelines" that were instituted following the FCC and FTC hearings in the 1970s concerning the extent to which advertising is unfair or deceptive on children's television. A number of suggestions were made as a result of

those hearings, including two federal regulations: forbidding "host-selling," and instituting program-commercial separators to help children recognize the difference between programs and ads. Other guidelines that have continued to govern children's commercials (like the "island" or "tombstone shot" required in toy ads with associated disclaimers, and the "legal breakfast rule" in cereal ads) are not federally mandated but are part of each network's internal broadcast standards and practices requirements.

It is not clear how successful these guidelines are in protecting children from unfair methods of persuasion, because it is not clear that children are able to understand the intended message (FTC Staff Report, 1978). But even aside from that, the adherence to these guidelines appears to have been relaxed tremendously over the last decade. The HDTV Archive contains a number of examples of "host-selling" (i.e., where a character is featured in both the program and in a commercial that is shown during that program). Therefore, even though that federal rule has been on the books since the early 1970s, there apparently hasn't been much enforcement of it recently.

The program-commercial separators started out by saying things like "We'll be right back after these messages." Even that isn't very clear if your purpose is to alert children to the nature of the messages they are about to see (the networks might be better off saying "Now we're going to try to sell you something" or "Here comes a commercial"). But even these separators have degenerated in their format, so that many of the separators that appeared during the most recent HDTV Archive samples simply say "We'll be right back" or consist simply of visual images with no verbal caution at all. Furthermore, there is a growing tendency to show a separator following some program content, then show 3 or 4 commercials,

then show another separator (which usually indicates that you are going back to the program), but then follow it with another 3 or 4 commercials. The consequence of this practice is to draw the audience's attention back to the screen with a signal that the programming was about to begin again, and then show them some more commercials. It may not be illegal, but it is certainly not in the best interests of informing or protecting children.

Even guidelines (see Condry, 1989, p. 230) like the "island shots" in toy ads (where the toy must be shown in its actual size, with no frills or action, for 5 seconds at the end of the program) and the "legal breakfast rule" (where the cereal must be shown as part of a "complete" or "nutritious" breakfast including fruit, milk and toast, for 3 seconds) appear to be loosening up compared with previous years. There are many examples in the most recent HDTV Archive sample where these shots are only 1 or 2 seconds long, and the statements or disclaimers accompanying them are often very vague and/or very rapid ("some assembly required," "parts sold separately," "part of a great breakfast").

Other misleading practices in commercials - like mixing cartoon images with live shots, using camera angles to make the toys look larger than they are, showing the toys doing things they can't really do - also appear to have increased since the early 1980s. This seems to have occurred despite the efforts of the networks' standards & practices departments, that employ people to supervise and enforce their in-house regulations.

This brings us to the issue of regulation and deregulation. While the HDTV Archive does not contain data prior to 1983, it is possible to piece together information from other sources (Barcus, 1978; 1980; FTC Staff Report, 1978). What can be concluded is this: in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the number of commercials on children's television and the use of

deceptive practices of persuasion in those commercials were apparently very prevalent and increasing. The FTC and FCC hearings held during the early 1970s did not result in many federal rules, but they did lead to important guidelines that were put into place by the networks themselves partly as a function of pressure from Federal regulatory agencies and consumer groups. These held for almost a decade, from 1974 until 1984.

In 1984, however, the Chairman of the FCC during the Reagan administration announced that children's television would essentially be deregulated, for example, that the existing limits on the amount of commercial time during children's television would no longer be enforced (Huston, Watkins & Kunkel, 1989). What did that do to Saturday morning television? As noted earlier, one consequence was an increase in the amount of violence in programs. As can be seen in **Fig. #6**, deregulation seems to have stimulated an increase in the number of minutes of product commercials. What is perhaps even more interesting is that when a new limit to the number of minutes of product commercials was proposed in the Children's Television Act (10.5 minutes per hour), the ceiling set was much higher than the average number of minutes per hour then being shown. That act was originally proposed in 1988; it was passed by Congress but subsequently vetoed by President Reagan. Since that time, the number of minutes of commercials on children's programs has continued to climb up towards this new (proposed) limit, and even though the act was finally passed last year, the number of minutes of commercials is now over that 10.5 minute limit on at least two of the three networks as indicated by the March 1991 HDTV Archive sample.

So in the end, what can we say about the nature of network programming for children? It is still a very commercial, perhaps egregiously so. The amount of advertising has increased over the last 20

years, both in frequency and as a percent of the non-program time, while the number of "informational" or "educational" messages has declined steadily. Advertising practices once considered unfair to children, such as "host-selling," have returned and deception of various sorts (using trick camera shots and clever editing) has again become common in ads. The same is true of sexism in the form of traditional sex roles. Little girls are shown almost exclusively concerned with how they look and using products to make them more beautiful, while little boys are shown as loud and aggressive, concerned primarily with defeating an "enemy" using the latest in high-tech military equipment. The food products advertised are still for heavily sugared cereals and candy with few if any warnings about the health risks involved in eating such foods.

The programs themselves are cheaply produced animation (no live performers at all for the Fall 1991 season) with apparently little thought about the informational value to children. Violence is prevalent and increasing. Network programmers and their advertising colleagues appear to be content to grab and hold children's attention long enough to show them a commercial message. If things have changed in the last 20 years, they have changed for the worse. There is more mindless drivel and less meaningful programming for children. It is our sincere hope that when the children of 1991 become the adults of 2001 we will not have to regret that we did not provide the best television that we have to offer rather than the worst.

References

Alvarez, M., Huston, A.C., Wright, J.C., & Kerkman, D. (1988). Gender differences in visual attention to television form and content. Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 9, 459-475.

Barcus, F. E. (1978). Commercial children's television on weekends and weekday afternoons. Newtonville, MA: Action for Children's Television.

Barcus, F. E. (1980). The nature of television advertising to children. In E. L. Palmer & A. Dorr (Eds.), Children and the faces of television: Teaching, violence, selling (pp. 273-286). New York: Academic Press.

Bence, P. (1987). From "Howdy Doody" to "Hulk Hogan's Rock 'n Wrestling": A 36 year history of children's network television. Unpublished manuscript, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

Carter, B. (1991, May 1). Children's TV, where boys are king. New York Times, p. 1, C18.

CBS, Inc., Office of Social Research. (1977). Network prime-time violence tabulations for the 1976-1977 season and instructions to coders, 1976-1977

Condry, J. (1989). The psychology of television. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, Associates.

Condry, J., Bence, P. & Scheibe, C. (1988). Non-program content of children's television. Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media. 32 (3), 255-270.

Condry, J. & Scheibe, C. (1989). Nonprogram content of television: Mechanisms of persuasion. In Condry, J., The psychology of television (pp. 173-227). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, Associates.

Federal Trade Commission (1978). FTC staff report on television advertising to children. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Gerbner, G. and Gross, L. (1980). The violent face of television and its lessons. In E. L. Palmer & A. Dorr (Eds.), Children and the faces of

television: Teaching, violence, selling (pp. 149-162). New York: Academic Press.

Gerbner, G. and Signorielli, N. (1990). Violence profile 1967 through 1988-89: Enduring patterns. Unpublished manuscript, The Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

Huston, A.C., Greer, D., Wright, J.C., Welch, R., & Ross, R. (1984). Children's comprehension of televised content with masculine and feminine connotations. Developmental Psychology, 20, 707-716.

Huston, A.C., Watkins, B. A. & Kunkel, D. (1989). Public policy and children's television. American Psychologist, 44 (2), 424-433.

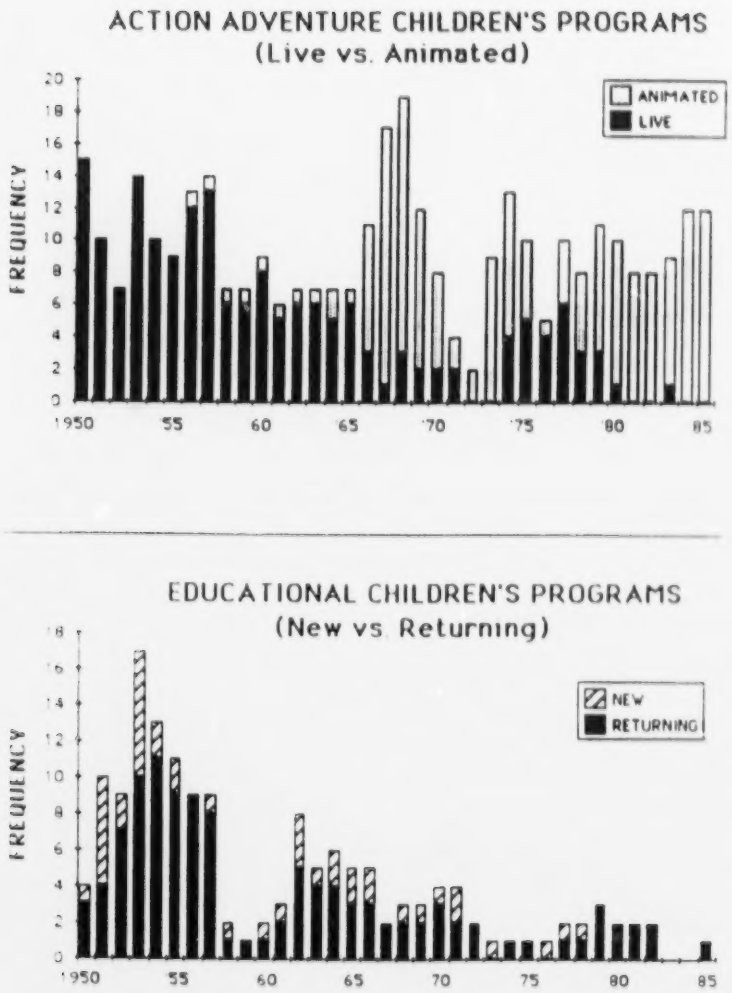
Huston, A.C., & Wright, J.C. (1983). Children's processing of television: The informative functions of formal features. In J. Bryant & D.R. Anderson, (Eds.), Children's understanding of television: Research on attention and comprehension. NY: Academic Press.

Kunkel, D. (1991, April). The genesis and implications of the Children's Television Act of 1990. Presentation to the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Seattle, WA.

Paik, K. (1991). Children's understanding of the meaning of gender-typed formal features in television commercials. Unpublished master's thesis, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

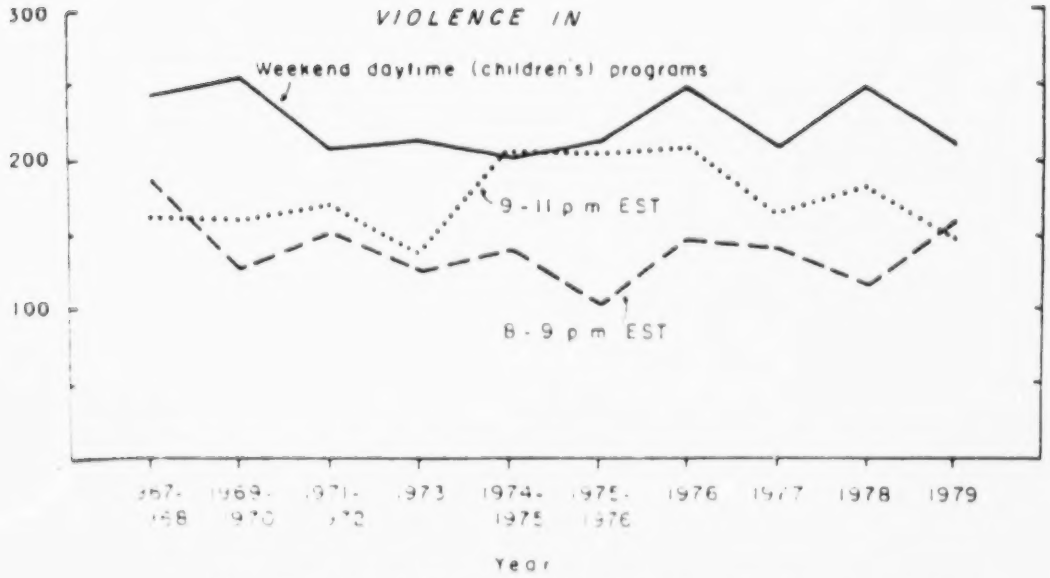
Signorielli, N., Gross, L., & Morgan, M. (1982). Violence in television programs: Ten years later. In D. Peal, L. Bouthilet & J. Lazar (Eds.), Television and behavior: Ten years of scientific progress and implications for the eighties, Vol. 2, Technical reviews (pp. 158-173). Rockville, MD: NIMH.

FIGURE 1.



Changes in action adventure and educational children's programs, 1950–1985. (Information from Bence, 1987.)

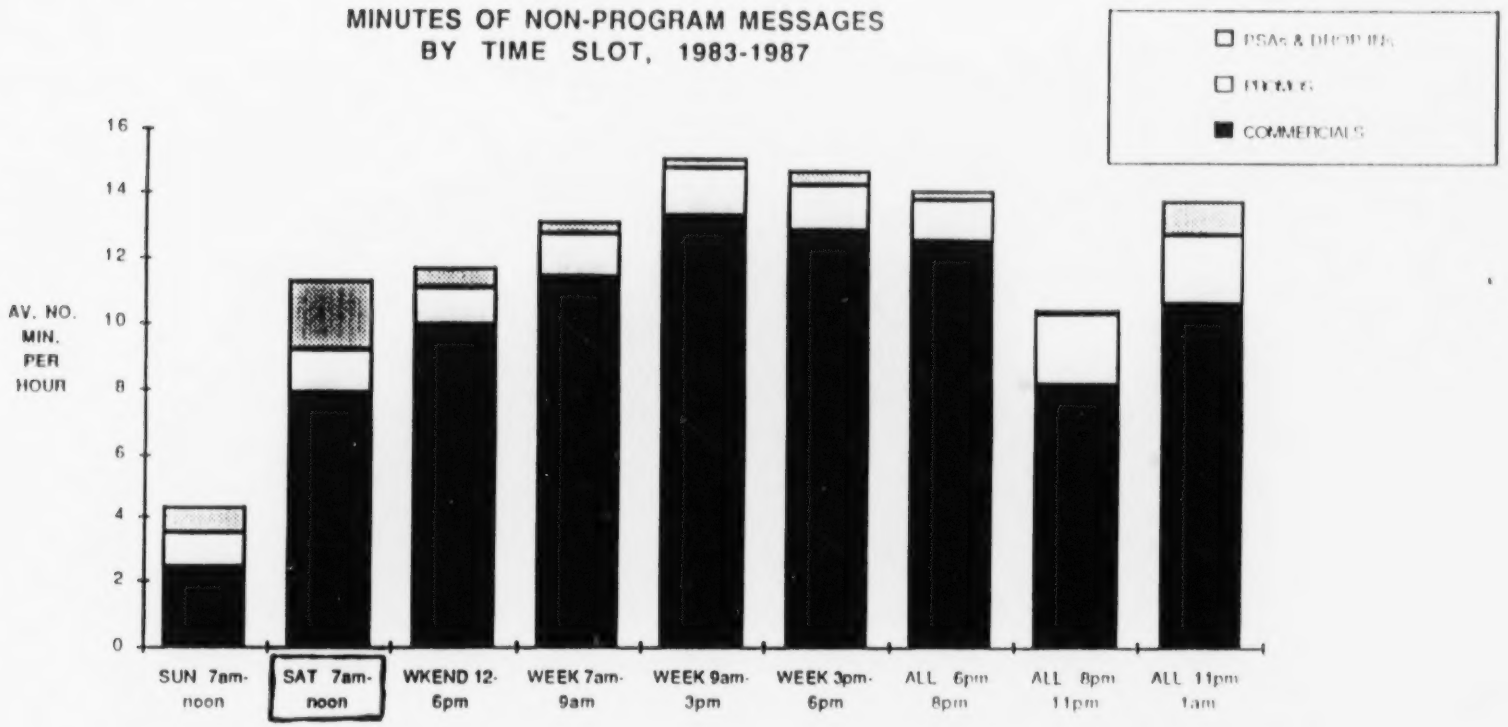
FIGURE 2.



Violence index in children's and prime-time programming, 1967-1979. (© Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980.)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FIGURE 3.



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FIGURE 4.

Average Number of Non-Program Messages on Saturday Mornings and Weekday Afternoons, by Message Type and Year (1983-1987).

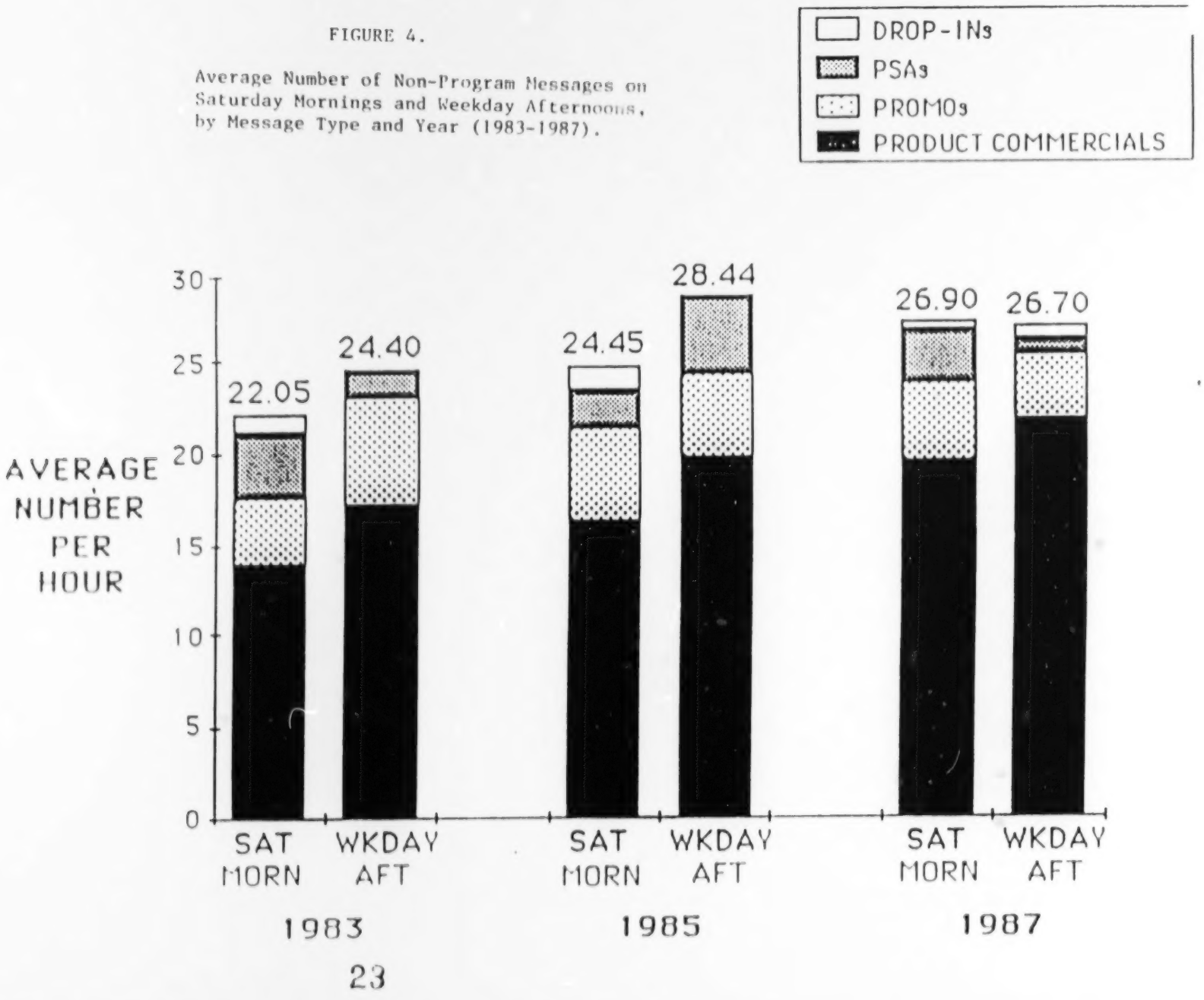


FIGURE 5.

PROPORTION OF AVERAGE HOUR OF TV DEVOTED DIFFERENT MESSAGE TYPES (1983-1989).

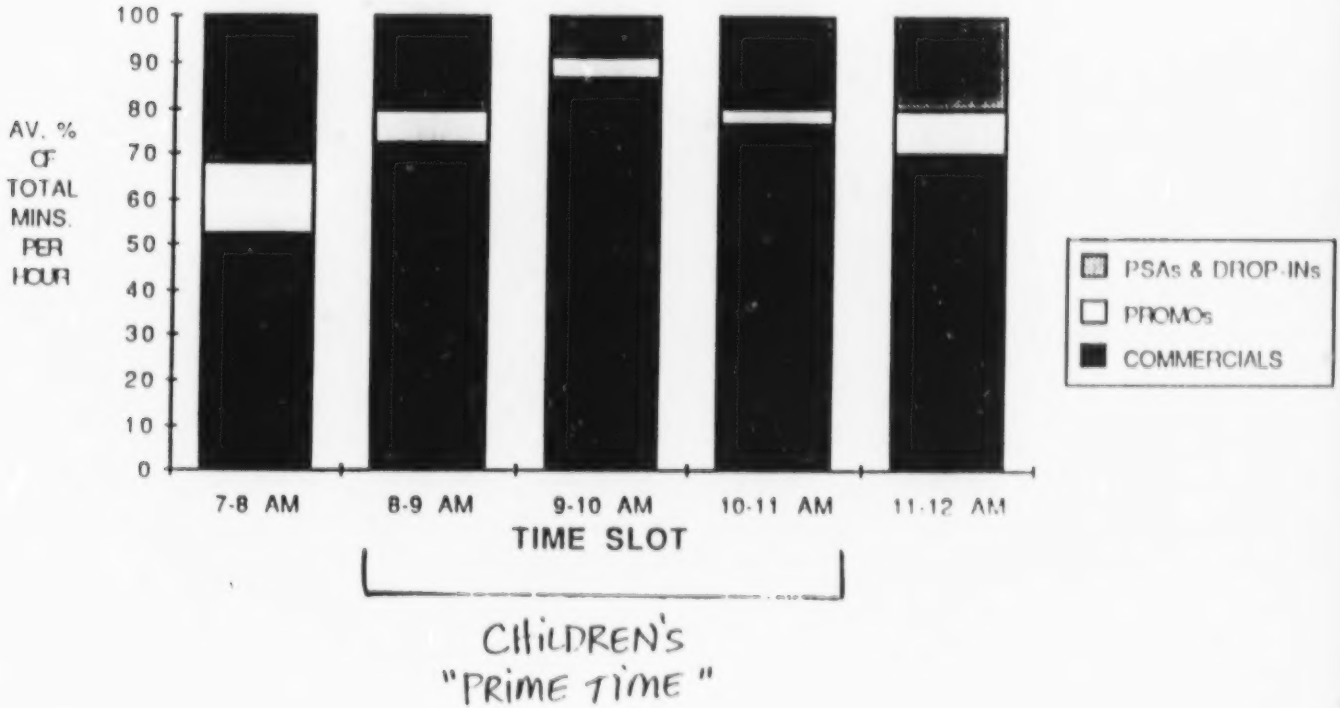


TABLE 1.

SUMMARY DATA, MARCH SAMPLES ONLY
(SATURDAY 8 am - 11 am)

Frequency of Messages
(average per hour)

	1983	1985	1987	1989	1991
Commercials	14.3	18.0	19.7	22.0	22.0
Promos	3.7	5.0	5.0	7.3	5.3
PSAs & Drop-Ins	5.0	3.0	1.7	1.7	2.3
Total Messages	23.0	26.0	26.4	31.0	29.6

Amount of Time
(average minutes per hour)

	1983	1985	1987	1989	1991
Commercials	7.39	9.00	9.17	9.89	10.67
Promos	0.89	0.67	0.75	1.59	0.75
PSAs & Drop-Ins	4.30	4.06	1.08	0.98	1.11
Total Messages	12.58	13.73	11.00	12.46	12.53
Percent of Total Time Devoted to Commercials	58.7%	65.5%	83.4%	79.4%	85.2%

Table 2

Percentage of Nonprogram Messages Based on Combined Samples of Children's Television From Saturday Morning and Weekday Afternoons

Message and Product	Barcus 1978	Condry, Bence, & Scheibe 1983	1985	1987
By Message Type				
Commercials	68.2%	65.2%	66.6%	74.4%
PSAs	9.1	12.3	10.5	8.1
Promos	22.7	19.2	19.4	15.3
Drop-ins	(N/A)	3.3	3.5	2.2
By Product Type				
Toys & Games	12.0%	19.6%	33.1%	36.2%
Cereals	34.0	31.8	20.5	22.8
Candy/Snacks	32.0	19.6	14.5	17.2
Other Food/Beverage	1.0	1.5	4.6	3.4
Restaurants	15.0	12.5	8.8	7.9
Other	6.0	15.0	18.5	12.5

FIGURE 6.

MINUTES OF PRODUCT COMMERCIALS, BY YEAR

(MARCH SAMPLES ONLY)

SATURDAY, 8 am - 11 am